



OFFICE OF SMALL BUSINESS ADVOCATE

2018 ANNUAL REPORT

Justin P. Wilson
Comptroller of the Treasury

Richard Wilson
Small Business Advocate

The 2018 Annual Report of the Office of Small Business Advocate is prepared in accordance with Tennessee Code Annotated § 8-4-706. This report provides an overview of the Office's activities during the past year.

MESSAGE FROM THE SMALL BUSINESS ADVOCATE

Dear Members of the 110th General Assembly,

As I have traveled the state speaking to business organizations over the last year, I have often asked, "How many people here own a business?" It is no surprise that hands go up immediately. More than 95% of Tennessee businesses are considered small businesses.

It is always encouraging to see the enthusiasm on the faces of these entrepreneurs. They are excited and proud to own a business in Tennessee. Small business owners are optimistic about the direction of the state's economy. They are celebrating strong growth and profits thanks to the business-friendly policies implemented by the Tennessee General Assembly.

With more than 40,000 employees in Tennessee's executive branch, the process of navigating state government can be overwhelming and burdensome for many people who are either looking to start or currently own a business. The Office of Small Business Advocate (OSBA) is dedicated to making the business owners of Tennessee feel as if they are only dealing with one person in state government.

As Small Business Advocate, my job is to serve the small business owners of Tennessee. Whether that is answering questions directly from small business owners or being a voice to state government officials and the legislature on their behalf, I am here to help.

Small business owners should never feel frustrated by their experience with state government. The OSBA is committed to solving problems and serving your constituents.

Every minute a business owner wastes dealing with confusing bureaucracy is a minute they could have used to grow their business.

If you or any of your constituents have any questions about running a small business in Tennessee, please do not hesitate to contact the Office of Small Business Advocate.

Thank you,



Richard Wilson
Small Business Advocate



CONTACT INFORMATION

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For more information visit:
www.comptroller.tn.gov/OSBA

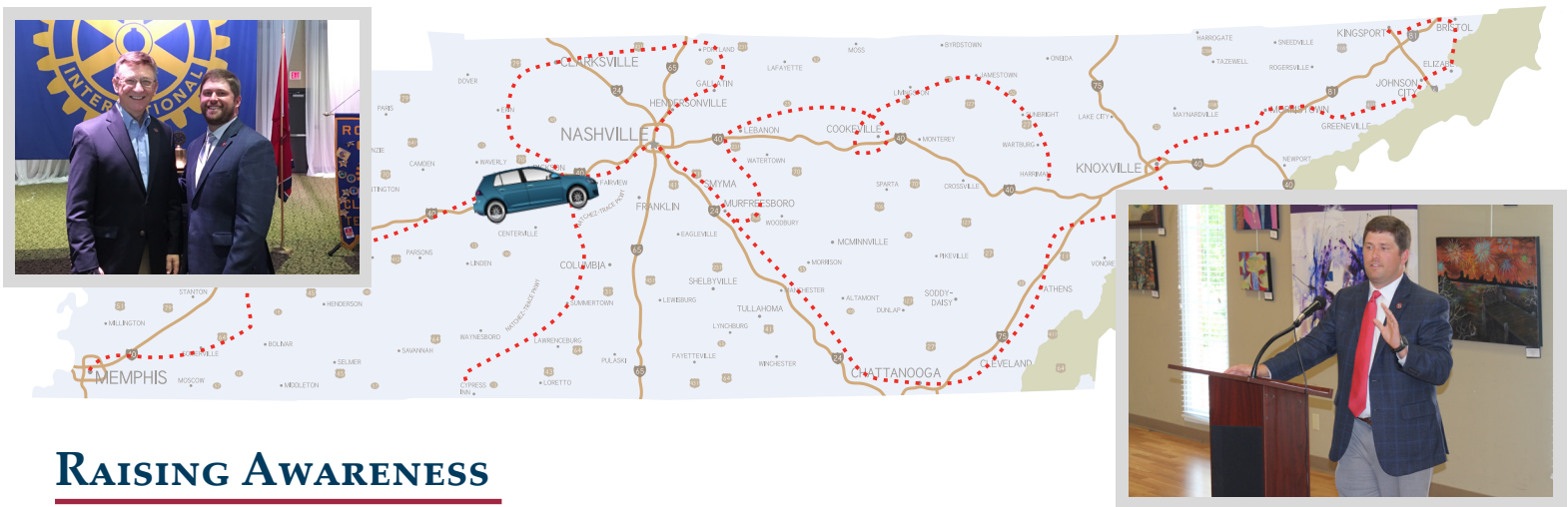


HISTORY OF THE OFFICE

Chapter 1129 of the Public Acts of 2010 established the Office of Small Business Advocate (Tenn. Code Ann. § 8-4-701 *et seq.*). The Office of Small Business Advocate is housed in the Office of the Comptroller of the Treasury and serves as a point of contact for Tennessee small business owners to state government. The mission of the Comptroller's Office is to make government work better. The Office of Small Business Advocate supports the mission by making government work better for Tennessee's small business owners.

OSBA ROAD TRIP ACROSS TENNESSEE

Throughout 2018, the OSBA conducted a road trip across the state to visit with community and civic organizations. Please contact the OSBA if you would like the Small Business Advocate to speak to one of your local organizations.

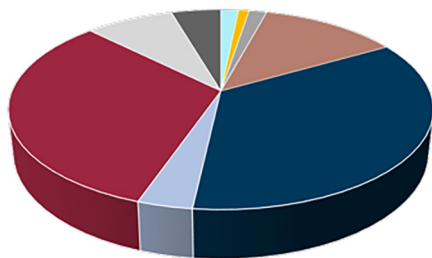


RAISING AWARENESS

During the past year, we raised awareness of the Office of Small Business Advocate by:

- ✓ Launching a road trip across the state to visit community and civic organizations.
- ✓ Creating an infographic to distribute to small business owners and government officials.
- ✓ Visiting with SCORE and Tennessee Small Business Development Centers across the state to make sure small business owners have the resources to be successful.

OFFICE INQUIRIES



Since its creation, the OSBA has assisted in resolving more than 2,800 inquiries.

From July 1, 2017 – June 30, 2018, the OSBA assisted small business owners with 311 inquiries.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What does the Office of Small Business Advocate do?

The Office of Small Business Advocate is housed within the Office of the Comptroller of the Treasury and was established to make state government more responsive to Tennessee's small business owners. When a Tennessee small business owner has questions about which department they need to speak with in state government, or if they are experiencing difficulties with a state department or agency, they may contact the Office of Small Business Advocate.

When should a small business owner contact the Office of Small Business Advocate?

If a small business owner does not know who to contact or what procedure to use, then he or she should contact the Office. If a small business owner has attempted to resolve an issue with a department or agency and they are unable to reach a solution, or if a small business owner is having difficulties navigating state government, then he or she should contact the Office of Small Business Advocate.

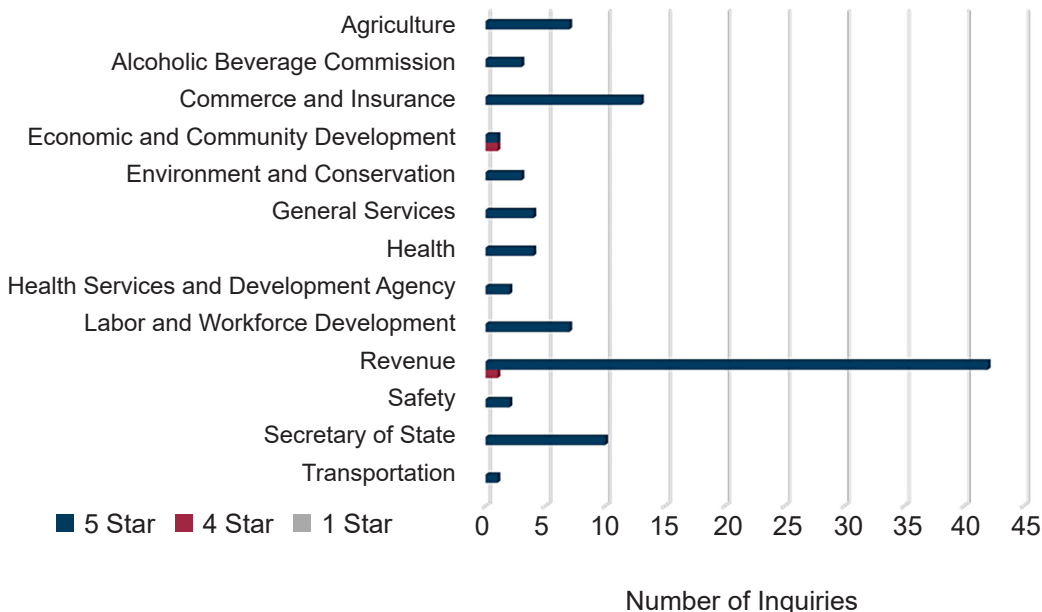
Who does the Office of Small Business Advocate contact within a department or agency to resolve an issue?

The law requires leaders of departments or agencies with regulatory authority over small businesses to appoint an employee to serve as the Office of Small Business Advocate's point of contact. A complete list of these individuals can be found on the Office's website.

AGENCY CONTACTS

As required by Tennessee Code Annotated § 8-4-703, the thirty state departments and agencies that report having regulatory authority over business have provided the Office of Small Business Advocate with a contact person. These contacts assist in the resolution of issues involving their agency. A complete list of agency contacts is available on the Office's website at <https://www.comptroller.tn.gov/OSBA/>.

AGENCY RESPONSIVENESS



Tennessee Code Annotated § 8-4-705 requires the Office of Small Business Advocate to evaluate and report annually to the General Assembly on state government's responsiveness to small business owners' concerns.

On January 1, 2013, a rating system for timeliness of response was implemented.

